GETTING ACQUAINTED WITH OUR PRESIDENTS

By GEORGE H. PICARD

IV.---Our Presidents as Breadwinners

THE first four Virginia statesmen who became Presidents of this country—Washington, Jefferson, Madison and Monroe—were not bread-winners from necessity. All of them were sons of rich men—planters who had turned the fertile soil of Virginia to great personal advantage and were landed proprietors who, had their estates been located in the mother country, would have been entitled to rank as squires of commanding influence. As it was, they were the landed aristocracy of the colonies, and their children were not taught to believe that they would have to hustle in order to keep the wolf from the door.

Had he been so inclined, George Washington might have made the journey of life without strenuous personal effort. At the age of eleven his father died, leaving an estate which was ample to provide liberally for the needs of his entire family. Laurence, his eldest son by a former marriage, who was an Oxford man and the husband of the daughter of the rich William Fairfax, inherited the noble domain on the Potomac, which he named Mount Vernon in honor of the admiral under whom he had served a while in the West Indies. From the first it was arranged that George should become possessor of the old homestead on the Rappahannock, and should be brought up as a planter with that end in view.

But it was ordered otherwise. The young man was not to devote himself exclusively to the management of that fertile estate on the Rappahannock. He inherited Mount Vernon, married the rich Mrs. Martha Custis, who brought him another fortune of $160,000, and settled down to live the life of a Virginia country gentleman. He was an excellent man of business, and had he been compelled to depend on his own exertion for his daily bread would have made a great success of it. Although he was so well provided against want, he never hesitated to accept fees for his services as surveyor, and actually came into possession of considerable sums of money in that way. Lord Fairfax, for whom he surveyed an immense landed estate in the Shenandoah region, was a liberal patron. Afterward Washington was appointed public surveyor, and he never neglected to demand the fee to which he was entitled.

Had he so elected, the life of Thomas Jefferson might have been one of comparative ease and freedom from exhausting effort; instead, he made it a record of prodigious labor and wonderful accomplishment. At his majority he came into possession of one of the finest landed estates in Virginia. He knew nothing of farming, having been college-bred and, later, a law student. At Shadwell he applied himself so diligently to the study of agriculture that he soon became the model successful planter of the district.

There was something almost uncanny about the industry of the builder of Monticello. He rose at 5 in the morning, winter and summer, and began at once to set in motion the business of the day. He was master of the details of his large estate and nothing escaped his vigilance. All the time, too, he was fitting himself for admission to the bar, was an inveterate reader of everything to be found in the literary market, and kept up Greek, Latin and French. If a tithe of his biographers' accounts of his activity is fact, the author of the Declaration must have earned his daily bread before he ate it.

Throughout his entire public career Jefferson was a breadwinner of the most successful type. Before he became engrossed in State and national affairs he had entered into the active practice of his profession, and in seven years his clients had been so many that he had more than doubled his estate. There was much litigation in Virginia in those days, and the keen-witted lawyer profited largely from it. Time came when he needed even more than all his cleverness could secure. No money he ever received for his public services was sufficient to requite him for the enormous sums he spent both at home and abroad during that transition period of American history. The constant drain on his personal revenues was met by increased adroitness on his part, and his Virginia estates were made to yield their utmost farming. Surely Thomas Jefferson was the most amazing breadwinner of his generation. In his old age, however, adversity overtook him, he was obliged to sell his fine library and he expected to lose Monticello, but his friends rallied to his financial relief and the grand old statesman was spared that crowning sorrow.

James Madison and James Monroe were breadwinners of the voluntary sort. Both were born in affluence and might have lived the life of "stolid plenty" but for the opportunity that came to them to spend and be spent in the service of their country. William H. Harrison was also of the sterling planter class, but after his father had seen him safely through Hampden-Sidney College and he had gone to Philadelphia to study medicine under the famous Dr. Rush, the young sawbones obtained a commission in the army from General Washington and bolted for the frontier. From that time he became a breadwinner of the actual sort. With abundant opportunity to "feather his nest" in the political game which he played for so many years, General Harrison might have been the richest man in the country, but his sense of honor was of the most delicate sort and when he retired to his farm at North Bend he had little or nothing to live on.

Of the two remaining Virginia Presidents John Tyler inherited a large estate from his wealthy father and Zachary Taylor's early life was passed amid all the privations of the Kentucky frontier to which his family had gone from his native Virginia when he was a babe in arms. The mental training he received in that wilderness was of the most meagre kind but he grew up sturdy, active and self-reliant. He realized that he belonged to the breadwinner class and accepted the situation without a murmur. Early in life he became a soldier and for twenty-four years his military service was the defense of the frontier. It was a service that demanded unceasing vigilance, prompt action in emergencies and boundless courage. After he had won the rank of brigadier-general Taylor obtained a transfer to the Department of the Southwest, bought a plantation at Baton Rouge, La., and established his family on it, the first permanent home that had ever been his. For five happy years he followed agriculture successfully, and then the Mexican War broke out. When it was over, "Old Rough and Ready," as he had been dubbed affectionately by his soldiers, returned home prepared to spend the remainder of his days in securing a modest competence by raising cotton and cane. The politicians made him President before he had time to harvest his first good crop, and when he died, sixteen months later, he had not secured that coveted financial independence.

Both the Massachusetts Presidents had to depend entirely on their own ability to provide the daily bread supply for themselves and their families. The elder Adams was sent to Harvard at the great personal sacrifice of his parents to prepare for the ministry. When he decided to become a lawyer, he was thrown upon his own resources and was forced to become a schoolmaster temporarily. He had been practicing law six years before he obtained money sufficient to pay his wedding expenses, but from that time until the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, he found numerous clients, although his fees were small.

Throughout his entire public career John Adams was never at his ease in regard to money matters. During his long European experience in the service of his country he was harassed continually by lack of money, and it took all his Yankee ingenuity to steer clear of financial shipwreck. When he retired from the political field, a disgusted and disgruntled old man, he had barely enough to go back to his former simple life at Quincy.

His brilliant son, whom his father lived to see sixth President, was similarly burdened. There was never a time during his splendid diplomatic career when John Quincy Adams was financially unembarrassed. It was only after the close of his presidential term that he found the opportunity to save enough out of his professional earnings to provide for his declining years.

The other New England President, Franklin Pierce, knew little of luxury in his early life on a New Hampshire farm, but he was equally unacquainted with poverty. He went through Bowdoin, studied law with the famous Judge Woodbury and began his breadwinning career by plunging into the thick of politics. At the age of thirty-three he entered the United States Senate as its youngest member. Before that time he had won a brilliant reputation at the bar and had established the fact that he had learned the trick of money getting. After his retirement from politics, Pierce did not resume active business. He and his wife made a leisurely tour abroad, following the precedent established by his predecessor, Millard Fillmore.

Before Andrew Jackson had reached his fifteenth birthday he found himself alone in the world. The wretched poverty of his boyhood made this realization of the fact that he was without parents or near kinsfolk a matter of little regret. Tall, hatchet-faced, red-haired, headstrong and hot tempered, this forlorn lad faced stern necessity with a disposition that amounted to defiance. He tried to learn the saddler's trade, forsook it in disgust, afterward busying himself at whatever came to hand until he was about eighteen. Then he concluded to study law. He had no money and no education, beyond a knowledge of reading. That didn't worry him in the least.

After two years of rather indiscriminate law reading, horse-racing and cockfighting, young Jackson was licensed to practice law. His sudden development into a full-fledged attorney was regarded as a joke in Salisbury, the North Carolina town in which he was living, and he knew it would be of no use to hang out his shingle there; so in some way known only to himself, he obtained the appointment of solicitor for a faraway district in the western wilderness. He made the journey on horseback and rode into Nashville, Tenn., one day in late October, 1788.

Eight years later, Tennessee was admitted to the Union, and Jackson was sent to represent her in Congress. He had made himself the leading citizen in the State, and in the following autumn he was sent to the Senate. An appointment as judge of the Supreme Court followed, with a salary of $600 a year, almost equal to that of the Governor.

At the outbreak of the War of 1812, although he had suffered some financial reverses, Jackson was in very easy circumstances. When he returned home, a military hero, he found that his estate had dwindled in value, but he set to work vigorously and soon recouped himself. After three years of strict and most profitable attention to his private affairs he was called to conduct the Seminole War in Florida, and then he went home to Tennessee, he resumed his business activity, but not for long—the American people wanted Old Hickory for President.

The other President from Tennessee, James K. Polk, was at the time of his death a man of ample fortune, all acquired through his native ability as a breadwinner. His beginning was of the log-cabin type, but his subsequent career as a breadwinner was modeled after that of Andrew Jackson, whom he admired greatly.

Both of the earlier New York Presidents, Martin Van Buren and Millard Fillmore, were the architects of their own fortunes. The formers' father was a combination hotelkeeper and farmer, and his son never knew poverty, but the latter was no stranger to the hard lot of the early pioneer, his home was of the humblest and his opportunities were of the scantiest. Both chose the law as a stepping-stone to future independence, Fillmore doing office work and teaching school to pay his expenses, neither having the advantage of a college education, but both becoming winners of large fortunes.

It was necessary for James Buchanan to become a breadwinner, and his Scotch-Irish ancestry endowed him with the thrift and energy demanded. His father was a poor Scotchman, who came to America about ten years before the birth of the only Pennsylvania President, but he appreciated the value of an education as a business proposition, and determined to make a scholar out of his son. He lived to see his boy graduated with the highest honors at Dickinson College, at the age of eighteen. In 1812, James Buchanan opened a law office at Lancaster, Pa., and from the start clients came to him in ever-increasing numbers, until at the time of his election to Congress in 1820, he had one of the largest and most lucrative practices in the State. Buchanan was a free spender, and always kept up a large establishment, bachelor that he remained to the end of his days.

Of the twenty-six men who have won first place in this nation the two whose efforts at breadwinning up to the time they went into the White House, had proved less successful than all the others were Abraham Lincoln and Ulysses S. Grant. Both had been more or less active in the pursuit of financial independence, and both had accomplished great things, but neither had met with adequate financial return for his effort. Most of the earlier Presidents had fought their financial battles before going to the White House, and went up to receive their supreme honors as victors.

It is a fact that at the time of his first election to the presidency, Lincoln was only just beginning to emerge from the slough of financial uncertainty which had threatened to engulf him ever since he entered the race. His energy had been tremendous, his labors herculean, but he had little to show for it all. It was only at the beginning of his second term, when the war was over and the fearful strain which had bowed him with premature age had relaxed, that he could say to his wife: "Mary, we have had a hard time of it since we came to Washington; but now the war is over and with God's blessing we may hope for four years of peace and happiness, and then we will go back to Illinois and pass the rest of our days in quiet. We have laid by some money, and during this term we will try and save up more. But we shall not have enough to support us. We will go back to Illinois, and I will open a law office in Springfield or Chicago, and practice law, and at least do enough to help give us a livelihood."

At the time of his coming into the presidency, Andrew Johnson was practically in "Easy Street," although his property in Tennessee had suffered somewhat from the Civil War. As a breadwinner he had passed from the condition of absolute poverty—he had begun active life as a tailor's apprentice—to one of financial independence, and solely through his own ability to turn mother wit and executive readiness into dollars and cents. That he was a breadwinner of the most aggressive sort is made evident by the fact that he outstripped in the race many of his contemporaries who had been born in wealth and nurtured in kindly atmospheres and equipped with every social and educational advantage, in all of which the man who did not learn to read until his manhood was so markedly deficient.

As a breadwinner, General Grant was a conspicuous failure. When he left the army, in 1854, after serving with distinction in the Mexican War, he tried farming in a small way near his wife's home in Missouri, but was compelled to abandon it as a hopeless undertaking. Nor was his brief experiment with mercantile life, at Galena, Ill., in company with his brother, productive of encouraging results. Never a spendthrift, his subsequent exalted position as chief executive demanding the maintenance of appropriate state, he was never able to save from his salary enough to insure freedom from worry over the future. His was a trying position, albeit so enviable, and it would have been pitiful had not the great soldier's friends gone to his financial rescue. It is a fact that while he was doing his last work—writing his book of recollections—General Grant was living on borrowed money.

Rutherford B. Hayes never knew the struggle and grind of poverty. In his climb upward he never had to battle against privation, and to emancipate himself from the memory of actual suffering. After his graduation at Kenyon College, Gambier, O., he studied law and began his activity as a breadwinner in Cincinnati.

Theodore Roosevelt has never been a breadwinner from necessity, having inherited an estate sufficient to relieve him from all financial worry. After his graduation at Harvard, he studied law at Columbia, but became so interested in politics that he lost interest in the law, and is content to be known as a publicist.

William H. Taft was a successful breadwinner in his profession of the law before he entered public life.

Title of next week's article: "Our Presidents as Fighters."

Thomas Jefferson—rose at five in the morning and began at once to set in motion the business of the day.

PENNED BY WALLACE·IRWIN

THE GREAT MAN'S PRIMER OR GUIDE to SUCCESS

PICTURED BY E·W·KEMBLE

MR. SHUSTER OF PERSIA

ALL-AH be praised!

What for?

Here comes Fin-an-ci-al Kid back from Per-sia.

Hel-lo, W. Morgan! How did you leave the Shah and all the lit-tle Sha-lets?

"O Shah!" he re-plies dis-gust-ed-ly, shift-ing his fez to one corner of is fore-head so that he looks like Hap-py Hool-i-gan. It is ev-i-dent that W. Morg-an Shuster is sore a-bout some-thing.

But why should he be sore?

I dunno. Some of these young fellars are hard to suit. If you were jigged up on the tel-e-phone some Sat-ur-day morn-ing and a voice should say, "Hel-lo Bill, this is the Shah of Per-sia. Come right ov-er to Te-her-an and take the job of Min-i-ster of Fin-ance. Or-ganize, Morgan-ize or Schuster-ize the Country—we dont care. Sal-ary un-lim-it-ed. Our palace is at your dis-pos-al, in-clud-ing ham-mam bath, day-and-night mosque and all Oriental con-ven-iences—if the Shah should make you such a prop-o-si-tion, what would you do?

I'd say, "Quit yer kidd-in', O Royal Gheek!"

The Shah wasn't kid-ding, although he is only a kid and so dim-in-u-tive of stat-ure that his sword of of-fice tunks him on the head when he tries to walk with it. But the Shah ser-ious-ly wanted Mor-gan, and Morgan went be-cause he had a trust-ing young na-ture.

Did the Per-sians give him a good time?

A ver-y good time. Like lots of other folks who do not al-ways know where the mon-ey is com-ing from, the Per-sians are de-light-ful-ly hos-pit-able peop-le. The mem-bers of the Cab-i-net, as-sist-ed by the Mystic Shrin-ers' Brass Band, met him at the sta-tion. They dressed him in a suit of sol-id gold pa-jam-as and took him ov-er to the loc-al bath-house, where they blew him to a free scrub—although he real-ly didn't need it. Then they led him be-fore the Pres-ence.

What is the Presence?

That is the fine Or-i-ental way of re-fer-ring to the bil-lious little High-School boy who thinks he is a rul-er of the Per-sian Empire. Ov-er a de-light-ful re-past com-posed of Turk-ish paste, garlic and stewed cof-fee, the Shah and the Shuster dis-cus-sed affairs of state. As His Roy-al Kid-do didn't know any Eng-lish, and as Morgan's stock of Persian only con-sist-ed of the names of two or three rugs, they didn't get much fur-ther in pol-i-tics than the in-i-tia-tive, ref-er-en-dum and re-call. How-ever, the Shah made up in dec-o-ra-tions for what he lacked in con-ver-sa-tion. He pinned to Mor-gan's vest the Ord-er of the E-ter-nal De-fi-cit, the In-sig-nia of Om-ar Khayyam, the Garter of Fa-ti-ma and the Meda-l of the Myst-ic Mortgage. Aft-er which His Maj-est-y knight-ed him two or three times and sent him on his way.

It was a great night for Morgan.

So far so good. But when the hap-py Am-er-i-can reached his a-part-ments in the splen-did Julep Ki-bosh he found a-waiting him there an ancient mil-i-tary man with a set of Mormon whiskers.

"I am the Grand Vizier and I come to you with a pri-vate tip," said the Old Boy.

"Say on, O Zoolak Methusaleh!" quoth the cour-te-ous A-mer-i-can.

"My ad-vice is this: Beat it while yet there is time!" said the pat-ri-arch, point-ing in the gener-al di-rec-tion of Cin-cin-nat-ti.

What did His Whisk-ers mean?

Mor-gan found what he meant fast e-nough. Next morning he found a Rus-sian of-fi-cer and twen-ty Cos-sacks wait-ing for him out in the hall.

"We have came to es-cort your Ex-cel-lency," said the affa-ble for-eign-er.

"My Ex-cel-len-cy don't need an escort," said Our He-ro.

"Oh, yes he does!" re-it-er-a-ted the of-fi-cer.

"But I'm going out to col-lect rent-als, dis-tri-bute the Exchequer and raise the Nat-ion-al debt," quoth Mor-gan, "and I don't want to be both-ered."

"This is just the time you ought to be bothered—forward, march-ski!" said the courteous Slav, marshaling his troops in sets of fours. And so they followed him. It got so bad that the Head-Po-et of Stam-boul made the fol-low-ing rhyme:

"Mor-gan had a lit-tle job
Col-lect-ing Per-sian dough;
And ev-er-y-where that Mor-gan went
The Russ was sure to go."

Whenever Mor-gan col-lect-ed any tithes rev-en-ues, tax-es or oth-er forms of le-gi-ti-mate graft, the ar-my of whisk-er-ed moujiks would waltz right up and shake him down for it. He went from place to place sur-rounded by such a Rus-sian body-guard that strang-ers in town oft-en took him for the Czar. To vary the mon-o-ton-y of things, once in a-while a troop of Eng-lish Tom-mies would join the Russians and div-vy on the plun-der. One hap-less day Mor-gan so far for-got him-self as to cable the Czar and the King of Eng-land these dup-li-cate mes-sag-es:

"Who is run-ning Per-sian finan-ces—me or you?

Al-most in-stan-tan-e-ous-ly the ans-wers came back:

"Us."

One day the Shah called Morgan into the Pres-ence. His Maj-es-ty was weep-ing bit-ter-ly in his nurse's arms. Sob-bing to an in-ter-pret-er, the Royal Papoose spake as fol-lows:

"Bright-faced stran-ger, you have done all that Mort-al can do with Per-sian fin-an-ces—and Allah knows that is darn lit-tle. We like your spunk for speak-ing up to the Czar, and have half a mind to hon-or you with the reg-u-lar re-ward, which is boil-ing in oil."

"I seek not empty hon-ors," said the no-ble A-mer-i-can.

"Oh very well," said the Monarch, "then your en-gage-ment closes with this cor-po-ra-tion. Stand not upon the or-der of your beat-ing, but beat it!"

"But how a-bout my sal-a-ry!" enquired the in-ter-pred fin-ancier.

"Selim plunk backsheesh!" cried the pot-en-tater in Persian, the same mean-ing, "Send the bill to the Czar—he's to blame for every-thing."

So Mor-gan went hence?

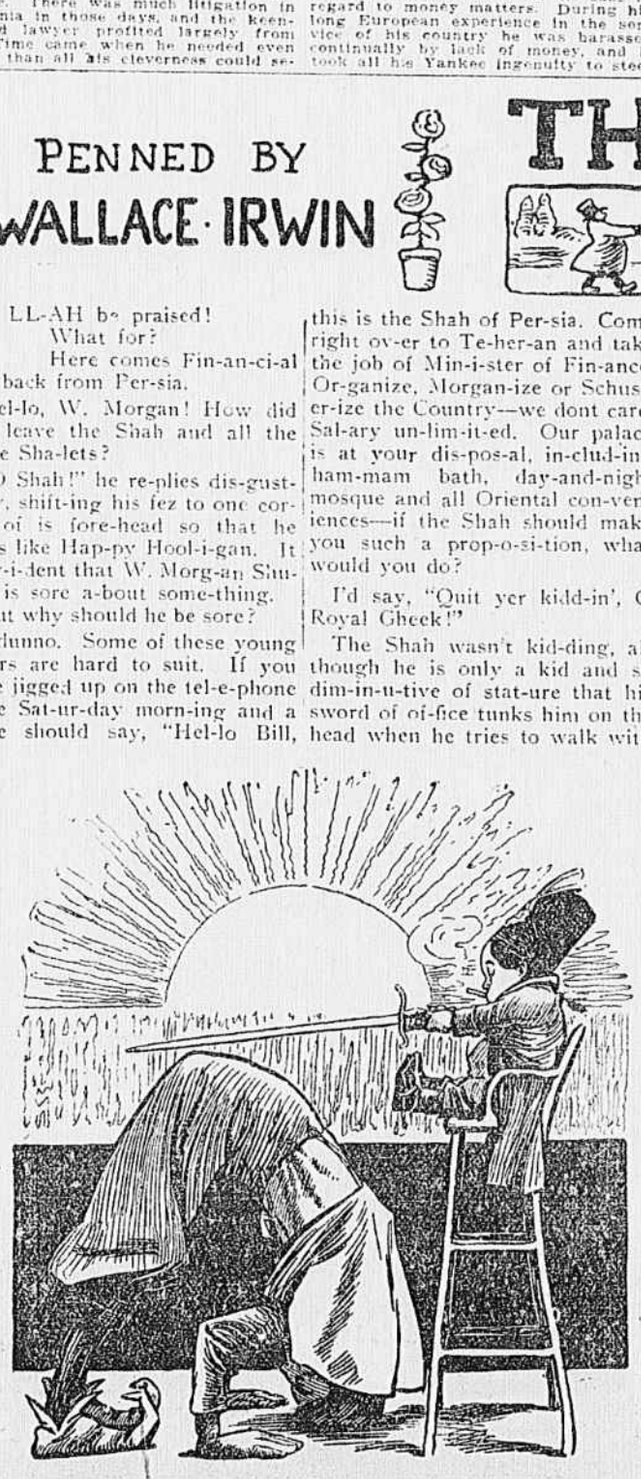
Yes. And he came hith-er. He says his ex-per-ien-ces in the lang-uid Or-i-ent are not so funny as they are ir-i-tat-ing. He says that, rath-er than fin-ance Per-sia a-gain, he'd accept the job of bus-i-ness man-a-ger of the Streets of Cairo ex-po-si-tion at County Fair.

There is a-bout an equal chance of win-ning out on either game.

Baby Clar-a, what les-son do we learn from this young life?

Teach-er, teach-er, this is the les-son we learn:

"The Or-i-ent of-fers a rich field for the bright young A-mer-i-can bus-i-ness man."



"HIS MAJESTY KNIGHTED HIM TWO OR THREE TIMES."

"HERE COMES THE FIANCIAL KID BACK FROM PERSIA."